



One day Ricardo brought some hats to the Coffee Club . . .  
 Standing (l-r): Stan Ross, Mike Storch, Fran Amidon, Dean Amidon  
 Seated (l-r): Marty Cherneff, Dick Tryon, Ricardo Boehm



In other news, Chief Backhaus reported that Massachusetts reports the highest incidence of drug use in the country, and Berkshire County has the highest use in the state. Heroin is becoming increasingly problematic in south county. With it come rising rates of other crimes like burglary. Be aware!

## Assessors Gain Ground

The Board of Assessors report that they are gaining ground on the backlog of work. Importantly, there are two new personnel: Bob Gauthier has agreed to serve on the Board, and Erik Kristensen of Lanesborough has been hired to work as the Assistant Assessor. Five applications for the latter position were received, and the Board interviewed three finalists. Kristensen, who has served on the Board of Assessors of Lanesborough for twelve years as an active assessor and runs a tool business when not assessing, was chosen, said Board member Stan Ross, because he was "particularly knowledgeable on valuations."

## Planning Board

Claudia Weldon has resigned from the Planning Board, which everyone

agrees is a loss of talent and intelligence. The Board continues to meet twice a month, and has significant work in front of it. Affordable housing, for example, has been under discussion. The town must demonstrate that it meets or is moving toward meeting the state's requirements for number of units of affordable housing each year to stave off the possibility of a developer coming in and building willy-nilly to supply those units under a 40B Comprehensive Permit Application, preempting town control. Many towns hire professional planners, either full or part time, to work with them, structuring the roles and responsibilities of the Planning Board, offering clear definitions of the goals of such work, making decisions about who will handle the various processes involved, etc. The Board's agenda also includes items on an accessory apartment bylaw, a nonconforming bylaw, a timbering bylaw, a diagnostic zoning/

planning review, and GIS mapping, as well as the Community Development Plan. It is intense and interesting work, of vital importance to each of us as we consider the town's future. Are you interested?

## Children

The demographic cycle has brought us to something of a dip in the number of children Monterey educates in public, private, or home schools. Town Clerk Barbara Swan said that while over the longer run, we generally have about 100-110 children of school age, at the moment we have only 94, of whom 12 are being home schooled and 19 are enrolled in private schools. This, she believes, is a short-term phenomenon, as a younger cohort with larger numbers is coming up the ranks toward school age. Preliminary discussions about the school district budget for the coming year are already underway with Rick Mielke as our representative.

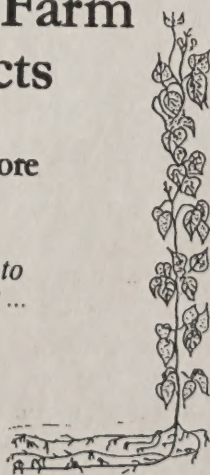


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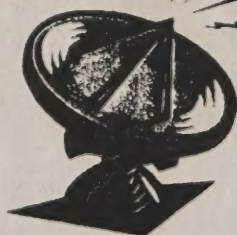
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## Scenic Mountains Act

Chris Blair, chair of the Conservation Commission, presented the Select Board with the draft map and details of the town's Scenic Mountain Act language. All of that will be reviewed and considered for adoption at a **public hearing on December 8 at 10 a.m. at Town Hall.** The Department of Environmental Management must also approve, and then the act must be registered at the Registry. Copies of the language, which runs to sixteen pages, and viewings of the map are available at Town Hall.

The longer sight lines evident now may be another reason Thanksgiving is in November. Wild turkeys, a notoriously difficult species to hunt, were more easily seen by those who would bring them to the table. Considering the number of volunteer hours, talent, effort, thought, and love for the town that have gone into committee work thus far this year—Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Wilson/McLaughlin Committee, Board of Assessors, Zoning Board, Select Board, and all the other town boards and committees that make Monterey work together as a true community—we have a great deal to be grateful for, not least the smaller-than-most-places number of metaphorical turkeys. Happy Holidays!

— K. Wasiuk

## Peter & Mary Alice Amidon in Christmas Concert

Come to a special family Christmas party at the Monterey Meetinghouse on Saturday, December 13, starting at 2 p.m. Festivities start upstairs with a concert of winter stories and songs with Peter and Mary Alice Amidon. After that you are invited downstairs for some goodies and, yes, a visit from Santa Claus for all children under twelve.

Based in Brattleboro, Vermont, Peter and Mary Alice Amidon (Peter is son of Dean and Fran, brother of Jay) travel throughout the United States presenting concerts and workshops of singing, storytelling, and traditional dance for children and teachers. Peter and Mary Alice are both versatile and widely respected performing and teaching artists who for the past twenty years have dedicated themselves to traditional song, dance, and storytelling.

The Amidons are equally at home doing a concert of stories and songs for adults or children, calling a contradance for adults or a community dance for all ages, leading harmony singing workshops with adults, or doing an elementary school residency of singing, storytelling, or traditional dance. Peter and Mary Alice are familiar faces at the major northeast U.S. music and dance festivals, at teacher

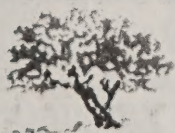


conferences, and at summer folk camps of traditional dance and song. They have performed concerts and led residencies in hundreds of schools, libraries, churches, and museums.

Thousands of teachers and parents have shared the Amidons' music through their albums of songs for all ages. And thousands of educators and community dance leaders have led children and adults in traditional American and English dances and singing games gleaned from the books and tapes produced by New England Dancing Masters Productions, which is run and owned jointly by Peter and Mary Alice Amidon, Andy Davis, and Mary Cay Brass. The Amidons have also released seven albums of songs for children and adults and are Vermont Arts Council Touring Artists.

The event is sponsored by the Monterey Coffee Club. For more information, call Dick Tryon at 528-0728 or Dean and Fran Amidon at 527-1233.

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## High Speed Internet Connection for Monterey

Many people in Monterey have expressed their frustration with slow, dial-up access to the Internet. This is particularly problematic for people running a business or "telecommuting," for which Internet access is a business necessity, not just a way to stay in touch with friends and do a little on-line research.

With the support of the Monterey Select Board, I investigated the options for high speed Internet access, and I thank them for the opportunity.

Our neighbors in the larger towns in the Berkshires can obtain high speed access through their TV cable company or over their existing telephone lines using a Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) service. However, the cable companies have confirmed that they have no intention of providing service to Monterey since it would not yield an acceptable financial return, and DSL service requires the subscriber to be within 2.5 miles of a Central Office Switch and the nearest one to Monterey is at the old train station in Great Barrington.

There is a way to overcome the distance problem by using "amplified" DSL (ADSL) and provide connection speeds of up to 100 kilobytes/second, around 4 times the typical rate from regular telephone service. The technology exists and there is a willing supplier, Intellicorp, a

company started by the son of Monterey residents Len and Marion Simon. But you can't order it today. First, Intellicorp needs the agreement of Verizon for them to connect the necessary equipment to the Verizon network and provide the service to subscribers. They have made the necessary application, but gears at Verizon grind extremely slowly, so it could be many months before they can make a firm offer of services. Pricing would be dependent on how many people sign up, but installation charges probably would be around \$200 with monthly fees of about \$75 to \$100 per month.

In the meantime, there are two other viable options: a T1 telephone line or a satellite dish. Berkshire Connect with Global Crossing can supply a T1 line with stunning 1.5 megabits per second performance—at least 30 times faster than a regular telephone line—but at a steep price. Initial charges would be in the region of \$1,400 and ongoing fees \$900 per month.

NDS Electronics in Pittsfield can install a satellite Internet service provided by Hughes DirecWay. Some early users of satellite service had problems getting a reliable signal. Recently Hughes moved their service to a different satellite which requires a dish with a higher vertical angle to the horizon than originally. In general, anyone with a DirecTV dish

should have suitable conditions in terms of adequate exposure to the southern sky for an Internet satellite connection—but it does require an additional dish.

Performance would be about 16 times faster than a regular dial-up telephone for receiving information, somewhat less than that for sending. For most users, the receiving speed is much more important; it determines how fast you can browse sites on the web. The installation and equipment costs are about \$800 for one PC or Mac and \$70 per month fee. If you have more than one computer, all can use a single satellite connection simultaneously, and each gets much superior performance to dial-up.

One thing to consider in regard to monthly fees for a satellite connection is that you will save whatever you have been paying to an Internet Service Provider (ISP) such as Berkshire County Network or AOL, probably \$20–\$25 per month, plus the cost of an additional telephone line if you have been using one dedicated to that connection, another \$30–\$35 per month.

Anyone wishing to review more of the technical details or see which other options were examined but found not to be viable is welcome to view a fuller report on our web site, [www.jandjconsulting.info](http://www.jandjconsulting.info) or call 413-528-4611.

— Bill Johnson



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## Pignatelli to Visit Monterey

On December 5th, our State Representative, William (Smitty) Pignatelli, at the invitation of the Monterey Democratic Committee, will attend a forum at the Monterey Meetinghouse basement at 7:30 p.m. It is hoped at this time, with so much pending in the Massachusetts legislature, that interested citizens of all political persuasions will attend.

Smitty will review his first year in office and respond to questions. He plans to discuss the state of the economy in the Commonwealth and the problem of balancing the budget, which, he says, is going into a \$2 billion deficit next year—while attempting to restore drastically reduced state services. We must find money for local aid to cities and towns, which are hurting badly, he said.

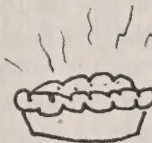
He will also discuss Prescription Advantage, the drug program for seniors, which is in danger of nonrenewal in view of fiscal restraints. The program is expensive, and next year the legislature will be reviewing how and if to continue it. Another item for discussion might be the DEP recycling program, which may be eliminated in the budget for FY 2005. Massachusetts has been a trendsetter in this area. He will also discuss other areas of Human Services.

Smitty also hopes to hear what the community thinks about the recent same

## Karl Finger to Entertain at Dec. 10 Community Dinner

We are fortunate to have a Monterey favorite to lead the program for the next community dinner on December 10. Karl Finger, lately seen at the Monterey Land Trust benefit in early November, will host a program of holiday music including some gospel, Hanukkah, and Christmas songs. A Monterey resident since 1969, he has appeared on radio and television and has over forty recordings to his credit, including the "Ballad of Route 23," which he has promised to perform for us. The program will be an informal gathering that will combine concert with sing-along.

We thank Raya Ariella from Center for Ecological Technology (CET) for her



sex marriage ruling, which is soon due to come before the legislature.

He looks forward to hearing our views and discussing future legislation.

Refreshments will be served and admission is free.

enthusiastic and informative program on green energy at the November dinner. (People who attended have been turning off unnecessary lights ever since.) Because of last-minute scheduling conflicts, we will have to wait until next year to hear some of our previously announced speakers, but here is the revised program list for the winter/spring 2004 dinners:

**January 14:** MaryKate Jordan on Edith Wharton in the Berkshires.

**February 11:** Dr. Philip Bhark on heart health.

**March 10:** Music by Eric Martin.

**April 14:** Melissa Preston and her llamas.

**May 12:** Monterey School students. (The June dinner has been discontinued due to lack of attendance in years past.)

Everyone is invited to attend the community dinners. Bring some food to share (6-8 servings), a serving utensil, a plate and silverware for yourself. We begin at 6:00 p.m. in the community room of the Monterey Meetinghouse at the intersection of Route 23 and Tyringham Road in the center of town, but in case of bad weather, please check with the Church message machine (528-5850) for cancellations and postponements.

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## Green Corner

### Tips for Saving Energy

The cold weather has arrived and thoughts are turning to fuel bills and making our homes more comfortable and energy efficient. Listed below are some low-cost/no-cost suggestions to save energy.

- Close all storm windows. Lock sashes.
- Open shades or draperies in sunny windows during the day; close them at night to cut down heat loss.
- Keep doors to unused/unoccupied rooms and closets closed when possible.
- Keep the fireplace damper closed (when not in use).
- Cover through-the-wall air conditioners (so cold air does not leak into the house).
- Purchase a clock or programmable thermostat and set back at night (to 60° F).
- Keep windows near thermostat closed tightly.
- Make sure attic hatches are insulated and well sealed.

You may be able to benefit from the financial incentives and other services available from Massachusetts Electric Company. The Home Performance with Energy Star Program offers a 75% rebate, up to \$1,000 towards eligible energy-saving improvement, including attic, wall,

## Monterey Open Space Plan

There's been a lot of work going on on our behalf in Monterey. I was stunned last month to see how much. At a meeting called by Michèle Miller with two UMass scientists, Kasey Rolih and Laurie Sanders, our town was presented with an almost completed Open Space Plan. All our town boards were represented along with a goodly bunch of Monterey citizens.

I have long been aware that we need to update our Open Space Plan. The last one was completed in 1990. These plans, to be eligible for state funds, need to be updated every five years. I worked on the 1990 one and had a vested interest in pursuing this, so a few years ago I got involved in trying to develop a new plan. However, the rules had changed a lot and were much more stringent. At the time, Williamstown was the only town that had managed to do it, mainly through the ministrations of the Williamstown Land Trust. I got hold of that plan, was thoroughly daunted, and gave up.

Now along comes UMass. (Drumroll!) I've attended two presentations by this group, one with Scott and Kasey last summer, and one in November, thanks to

and floor insulation, programmable thermostats, and more. You may also qualify for a \$300 rebate to replace your old inefficient refrigerator with a new Energy Star model. For more information on how you can take advantage of these incentives, call CET at 1-800-238-1221 and ask to speak with Karen or Joan.

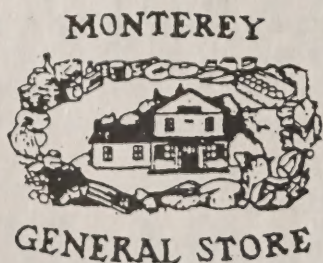
— Laura Dubester, CET

Michèle, who compiled 40 copies of a 5-page plan synopsis, then delivered them by hand all over town, and as a result got a sizable attendance for the meeting. This was the third such meeting. I missed the first one last spring, conducted under the aegis of the Monterey Land Trust, which garnered over 50 attendees.

The work the UMass people have done, their commitment to it, the depth of their presentations and last but not least, the huge amount of toil they are willing and able to tackle is truly extraordinary.

As an illustration of this I offer the following: Being all fired up after the meeting, I decided to try and write up what I could of the history of the plan, a bit about the UMass people involved, and what Open Space is all about. To this end I wrote Laurie Sanders, and asked for a bit of background. I expected a few sentences. This is what I got, bless her.

"During the last year Monterey has been working on several important planning documents, including an update of our 1990 Open Space & Development Plan. The plan (which is supposed to be updated every 5 years) is strictly an advisory document; it will summarize Monterey's ecological, historical and recreational resources, identify our conservation priorities, and include a five-year action plan to help us reach our goals and objectives. When it is complete, town officials can use the plan to minimize Monterey's vulnerability to development activities that are damaging to the environment and the town's character. The completed plan will also enable the town to receive state grants to buy land for conservation and recreation purposes.



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"For small communities like Monterey, preparing a plan like this can be challenging. To help the town through the process, Monterey is working with staff from UMass Extension's Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Program. The connection with UMass developed after Bryan Boeskin, a planner with the Berkshire Regional Planning Agency, saw a presentation on UMass's Biodiversity Project. Developed by researchers in UMass' Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Biodiversity Project uses state-of-the-art computer technology to identify areas in the Housatonic River watershed that are predicted to have the highest level of biodiversity. Biodiversity is shorthand for biological diversity, and in its broadest sense its definition encompasses all of the variety of life forms and their environments. It turns out that Monterey has several areas that, thanks to their large size and connections to other natural areas, are predicted to be among the very best in all of the Housatonic watershed for biodiversity. From a planning perspective, knowing where these areas are gives our town another way of identifying and prioritizing land for protection. In the past pinpointing areas of ecological importance really boiled down to a combination of educated guesses and firsthand experience. Although we generally know where trails are or where important recreation lands or historical features are located, until this point it has been impossible to objectively, quantitatively and comprehensively evaluate areas for biodiversity. This is really a brand new tool that has

only become available thanks to the power of computers, and we're one of the first towns in the country to actually incorporate ecology into our planning process.

"Many people in town have gotten a glimpse of these new ecological planning tools. Since last December, Scott Jackson, the head of UMass Extension's Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Program, has come to Monterey three times to give presentations on the topic. In addition, you may have seen other UMass Extension staff exploring Monterey this summer. Laurie Sanders and Kasey Rolih, both biologists, have visited town several times, familiarizing themselves with the roads and lay of the land and getting a sense of our town's special natural areas and recreation lands. Thanks to helpful input from Monterey residents and members of various town boards, UMass Extension is currently in the home stretch of writing a final draft. To see a copy and add your comments, please call Bonnie at Town Hall at 528-1443. Funding for the project has come from the state and also from a grant from The Trustees of Reservations' Highlands Communities Initiative."

As you can see, we have a scholar here—she is also passionate. Here's an excerpt from a letter she sent me, which included two incredible close-up photos of a rare and endangered dragonfly and another of a wood turtle, both species extant only because of our clear and unpolluted brook water:

"Meanwhile, here's a picture of the wood turtle I found on the Scheffey land in southern Monterey. I also included a

picture of a close relative of the endangered dragonfly that I found along that pretty stretch of brook that you and I both admire. Look at that paddle-like tail. Just like this one, the zebra clubtail has striking yellow and black markings. We actually didn't find any adults, but were able to identify them by their shed skins. I'll bring those along next time if you'd like to see them. It's a great way to identify dragonflies and have a better sense of the number of individuals emerging. The clubtails are a group of dragonflies that require well-oxygenated, clean waters."

She adds: "For me, what's so appealing [about Monterey] is not only how pretty it is, with a mix of farms, fields, and historic homes, but that it's biologically so interesting. With all the wetlands and brooks, and the richer soils thanks to calcareous bedrock, you never know what you might find."

So many hands went into all this. Thanks, UMass, thanks Michèle, thanks Monterey Land Trust, thanks Bryan Boeskin and BRPC, thanks The Commonwealth. And special thanks to the Highlands Community Initiative for being there, and providing grant money for this project.

—Joyce Scheffey

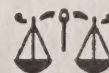
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## Last Local Mahican Visits Our Ancient Cairns

On the coldest day in late October, Professor Stephen Cromer (in photo), who believes he may well be the last person of Mahican descent still living on original ancestral land across the Hudson River in Sand Lake, New York, came to see the latest discovery of cairns in Tyringham by Dr. Richard Greene of The Bidwell House Board of Directors. Dick Tryon joined us as we took a walk back in time. The remote site, which Richard found quite by accident, contains more than thirty handcrafted primitive stone monuments, similar in construction to the Bidwell House cairns, and appearing to be situated in a graveyard configuration.

It was Rod Palmer who first showed me a cairn or two, on the side of the hill overlooking his pond, explaining to me that they had no agricultural significance and were not piles of rubble removed from fields by farmers. He also had been told that his hill was known to be connected with an Indian presence in the early history of his land. Rod and his late wife, Jeri Lynn, also provided me with a library of material on Native American archeology that had belonged to her father, who also had an extensive collection of artifacts. Their interest set me out on a long and winding trail of discovery which had grown very cold after hundreds of years.



George Emmons

The Bidwell House cairns of course had been there for all to see all these years, but a big break materialized in Sheffield when Dennis Sears, a member of the Sheffield Historical Society, read one of my articles in the *Berkshire Record*, and remembered seeing a very similar stone construction to the one in my Bidwell picture on a wilderness hill overlooking a valley where there had been a sizeable Indian village. This evidently was also where Jeri Palmer's father, Mr. Rossi, had found much of his collection,

leading me and Mr. Sears to go looking for the cairn he had seen. We have not been able to find it again, but in the process found at least seventeen more cairns, which appear to be in a graveyard location in the most beautiful spiritual landscape I have ever visited.

So Stephen Cromer, who has a Masters Degree in anthropology and is extraordinarily learned about the local history of native ethnic groups was fascinated to see firsthand what Richard Greene was so excited about. Stephen of

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course is a member of the Native American Institute and has signed me up, even though unlike him (his mother was Mahican), I am one only in spirit. Dick Tryon is a cairn enthusiast, as was the late David Cathcart. Our next walk was to see the mother of all cairns, the stone monument at the base of the mountain to which it gives its name (as described in *Manitou, The Sacred Landscape of New England's Native Civilization*, available in the Monterey Library).

Recently Rod Palmer, in the spirit of the National Repatriation Act of 1982, which returned Native American artifacts to the tribe most nearly associated with them, has donated Mr. Rossi's extensive collection to the Sheffield Historical Society, and that's pretty close to where Jeri and her father picked them out of the fertile fields along the Housatonic River. So the drumbeat goes on in a quest to learn more about the Mahicans who left here to settle in Wisconsin, where they operate the North Star Casino. Stephen Cromer is a fountain of information on this journey. The cairns seem to be some of the very few traces left behind, as the Mahicans placed capstones to memorialize the location. Are they sacred?

— George Emmons

## CET Donates Electric Vehicle to Gould Farm

The Center for Ecological Technology (CET) announced that it has donated fifteen Global Electric Motors (GEM) zero-emission vehicles to western Massachusetts cultural organizations, educational institutions, and municipalities. CET "regifted" vehicles that it received as a donation from Daimler Chrysler's GEM electric car division.

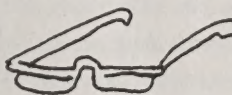
Area recipients of the electric vehicles include Gould Farm, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Hancock Shaker Village, Mass MOCA, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Simon's Rock College, Shakespeare and Co., Norman Rockwell Museum, Williams College, and the cities of Northampton and Springfield. These organizations will showcase and use these pollution-free GEM cars on their property. Currently, thirty-seven states have passed legislation accepting the National Highway Safety Transportation Administration (NHSTA) ruling to allow GEM cars on public roadways. It is anticipated that in spring 2004 the GEMs can be registered for use on Massachusetts roads with posted speed limits of 35 miles per hour or less. According to GEM, more than 28,000 GEM vehicles will be in use by the end of this year.



"At Gould Farm we are forever driving between the barns, gardens, offices,

maintenance buildings, and residences. The GEM car offers an environmentally appealing alternative to our trucks and cars, especially when we're transporting light loads or one or two people. They're easy to spot and comfortable to drive. And because they're open, they don't smell like the barn," noted Rita Kasky, Gould Farm's Director of Development.

Electric vehicles are an alternative to a full-sized automobile or small truck for short trips or for use on campus-type settings. They have lower maintenance costs, greater efficiency, no emissions, and can operate on tight roads, narrow paths or inside buildings. They have a range of about 30 miles before needing to be recharged and can be plugged into a standard 110-volt outlet for recharging. They are powered by a 72-volt GE motor and a battery pack comprised of six deep cycle 12-volt batteries. Their maximum speed is approximately 25 miles per hour.

CET's mission is to promote and demonstrate technologies that have less environmental impact. Providing zero emission vehicles to local organizations is an ideal way to educate the public and reduce pollution. "Everyone benefits from alternatives to standard gasoline engines. Our communities get cleaner air, commuters have clean, quiet and convenient transportation, and people are exposed to the design and capabilities of these all-electric vehicles," said Alan Silverstein, CET Director.



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## eclipse (the passing)

*in passing we've shaded,  
shadowed even, pages  
of soul experience  
inspired, but without tense,  
by some immediate  
sense or feeling you get  
when its all eyes or ears  
to feel, sniff or savour  
even one life eclipsed,  
even a young boy flipped  
out on honeysuckle  
convinced to unbuckle  
the pants of his manhood —*

*that taste of love withstood  
all passings, cruel shadows,  
lunar crossings all hallowed  
in despair and bleak guess  
of our one great weakness:  
of holding! holdin on,  
holding back, holding down!*

*yet lovely still the moon  
in all its passings through  
our skies, our minds, our poems  
veiled here and there by some  
passing clouds or great spheres  
crossing and reappears  
holding on to nothing  
shining in its passing*

— R. Zukowski

## looking for that little girl (for L.)

*painting new tunes with hues  
between blues and yellows  
a shade elusive still  
biting a golden plum  
blue berry memories  
coltrane and Miles appear:  
smiles and tears Trane could blow  
while Miles stayed Kidd of blue  
walls drawn of sunflowers  
to be and hide your face  
this art of hardy fools  
of holding hard to summer  
while sketching all its color  
looking for that little girl  
inside a whorl of women  
sheilding all this pain for  
that kissful rain of bliss  
fill this brush with sun's gold  
and rush the hills to autumn  
till the tears disappear  
and Marley reappears:  
"no woman, no cry," . . . yeah,  
thread this heart through winter  
dreaded and knotted tight  
and when the birds return  
return the girl anew  
(not any shade of blue)  
a woman whirling true  
beside these yearning strokes  
of lemon squeezed and wrought  
like rays of boyhood brought  
to bear this canvas full*

— R. Zukowski



## No Room at the Inn

*No room at the inn  
No room in our mind  
For the birth of the joy  
Of all mankind.*

*Come wake in our hearts  
Sweet Mother and Child  
In the part which is loving  
And undefiled.*

*Our eyes shall be stars  
Shining with light  
And people will sing  
In the holiest night.*

*Our hands shall be shepherds  
Tending Thy sheep,  
Giving and sharing  
What we would keep.*

*Good deeds shall be angels  
Flying above  
Bringing to man  
Peace, mercy, and love.*

*No room at the inn,  
No room in our mind,  
So come, come to our hearts  
Joy of mankind!*

— A. O. Howell



## Walking on a Cold Day in Nashville

*I want to break the interlocking grips  
of couples walking by, to watch them grow  
together once again. I want to slip  
inside their hands and bring my heart aglow.  
There is a loss of warmth beneath my chest,  
a blue-black steak I let her love and bruise.  
A walk through Nashville streets is like a test  
to see if love is just something to lose.  
But hands can always grow back together.  
I'm done believing love can do the same.  
To love someone again, I would rather  
not do. Love is a temporary flame.  
I've stopped walking — and thinking love exists.  
Life without her is like holding a fist.*

— Jacob Aron Weisman

## Christmas Memories

*Joys this generation misses  
And perhaps will never know  
Are the merry sound of sleigh bells  
Ringing out across the snow,  
The neighbors in for Christmas,  
Real candles on the tree  
Decked out with strings of popped corn  
A pretty sight to see;  
Gilded English walnut shells  
And chains of paper rings,  
Little cut-out angels  
And other homemade things.  
The real spirit of Christmas  
Was with us way back then.  
In dreams I go back  
To those good old days  
And live them over again.*

— Eleanor Kimberley



## Mexican Coffee, Berkshire Popcorn

Twice a week I eat lunch in a tropical arboretum surrounded by bananas, palms, tree ferns, bromeliads and a coffee tree. From the dry cold of December in Northampton, I come into the greenhouse, take the little-used (short) path to a secret wooden bench, and take off a few jackets. The mist-making device starts up and I unpack my lunch. Clouds of steam come down from pipes along the Victorian glass ceiling but they never land on me, sheltered as I am by the jungle canopy. I am eating homemade bread, carrots, and Jerusalem artichokes from the root cellar, and the dried apples and popcorn of home. I am sipping coffee from a red and white travel mug. I always pay a visit to the lone coffee tree of this Smith College plant house, and though it stands tall and leafy, it does not make coffee. The director of the greenhouse told me this tree needs more sun. Not all varieties of coffee are the "shade-grown" type so favored by the politically and environmentally correct among us addicts. This one

was started here decades ago before that consciousness hit town. Now the greenhouse staff have planted some seedlings of the other type, the kind that does not require clear cutting, that leaves a mixed forest which benefits wildlife and keeps the hillside from washing away.

My coffee, in the mug, is the shade-grown type. It is also Fair Trade coffee, which means much more of my coffee dollar goes to the farmers than would be the case if I had bought "Free Trade" coffee. Fair Trade is a little-known movement in this country, a bit more visible in Europe, which can connect us wealthy-country consumers directly to the lives of the workers who produce our favorite goods. The NAFTA "free trade" system, like many organizations and options sporting the adjective "free," provides "freedom" for some at the great expense of others. For the coffee farmers of the Southern Hemisphere, "free trade coffee" brings about \$.30 per pound, whereas "fair trade" guarantees a bottom price of \$1.26 (or \$1.40 for organic).

Fair Trade labeling means the removal of certain middlemen, some called "coyotes," from the system. It also carries responsibilities and benefits for the com-

munities producing the goods, including forming cooperatives to pool resources and share ownership of transportation (mules, trucks) and machinery (little hoppers to knock the hulls off coffee beans).



We got a short video about coffee farming from an organization called Global Exchange. I saw the growers of Mut Vitz, Chiapas (Mexico), farming their crop. They look kind of like me in our garden. They practice organic methods and explain (in their native language of Tzotzil, with English subtitles) the great care and pride taken in sustainable agriculture and a superior crop. The only problem, in their cooperative of more than 1,000 members, is that there is not enough market for Fair Trade coffee.

This is where we consumers come in. I learned a few years ago that on the

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world commodities market, coffee is number two. This means that there is only one other thing being traded around the world that makes more money for somebody than coffee. That number one thing is oil! Coffee is second only to oil, and here in the US we drink 20% of the world's coffee. So the money we spend on coffee is very big and has the power to transform, if only we can see where it goes.

Here in Berkshire County we can get Fair Trade Coffee at several local coffee shops and markets. We can buy it by the pound (look for the label) or in the cup, and it is coffee of a superior flavor. We can get coffee a little easier at certain drive-through places and big markets, but it may not be cheaper, it won't be better, and it won't change lives and soil conditions in Chiapas, Peru, or Nicaragua. It will make certain stockholders (Nestles, Kraft) happy but it won't result in enough money for food and medicines for farmers in the mountains of Central and South America.

Thanks to the Fair Trade videos, I have watched people who farm the way I garden, laboriously getting in a crop, spreading it to dry, taking it in when rain threatens, putting it out, taking it in. The coffee beans get handled so many times before they even leave the farm—it reminds me of us here in Monterey with this year's popcorn crop. First we had

poor germination and had to sprout another batch of seed in the house. Then the plants blew down in a big wind and had to be propped up. Then they got rained on pretty steadily for weeks when they should have been drying on the stalk. Finally we brought the sopping ears into the house, husked them, dried them, worked the kernels off the cobs by hand. At last we made popcorn! It was grown here, using methods that are healthy for the land and for us. It is delicious and fresh.

I take popcorn in my lunch and sit in the Smith College greenhouse near the lonely coffee tree. I go to Northampton easily, and now thanks to my understanding of the Mut Vitz cooperative and others like it, I also feel direct involvement in the small farms of Chiapas. The role for us northern rich folks is not to quit drinking coffee or driving our fine cars to Northampton. It is to have understanding of our world connections, commercial and botanical, and to involve ourselves in the lives of the coffee farmers, though we may never meet them. Like me you might be able to get or grow good popcorn, but for coffee go as far as you can with: TransFair USA, [www.transfairusa.org](http://www.transfairusa.org); Mut Vitz, Chiapas, [www.chiapasmediaproject.org](http://www.chiapasmediaproject.org); Fair Trade Cooperatives, [www.equalexchange.com](http://www.equalexchange.com).

— Bonner J. McAllester

## 2004 Ice Skating Lessons

The Southern Berkshire YMCA is pleased to announce winter ice skating lessons for children five years of age or older. This is the fourth year the lessons have been offered at the Monterey Ice Skating Rink/Firehouse Pavilion. A total of five lessons will be offered beginning January 3, weather permitting. Lesson schedules are as follows: Intermediate Lessons: 9–9:45 a.m.; Beginner Lessons: 10–10:45 a.m.. The fee for the lessons is \$40 per child for a total of five lessons. However, the fee is discounted for Monterey residents and SBYMCA members to \$30 per child for a total of five lessons. Financial assistance is available for all SBYMCA programs; inquire for details. Helmets and single-blade skates are required. Please call Marta at 528-YMCA (9622) to register as soon as possible, as numbers are limited.



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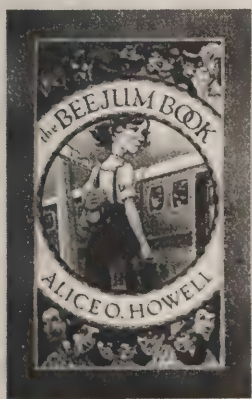
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— Andrew Harvey, author of *The Direct Path*

Read this book to yourself or read it aloud to a young child, and delight in the hidden ironies of language and the pearls of wisdom you trip over when you least expect them. *Alice in Wonderland* magically mirrored the Victorian world, so *The Beejum Book* mirrors ours.

— Marion Woodman, author of *Addiction to Perfection*

Gutsy humor, outlandish language, serious tomfoolery.

— Thomas Moore, author of *Care of the Soul*

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## The Pecking Order

Among barnyard roosters and other domestic flocks, a behavioral ladder of dominance often called a pecking order is established, with those that rule the roost at the top rung and those more submissive toward the bottom.

In the wild bird world explored by ornithology, there is also a ladder of stratification of predators and prey established by Darwin's theory of survival of the fittest. With winter solstice coming on in Monterey, the great horned owl with its soft feathers permitting a sudden and silent attack, as well as powerful talons and beak, is probably unchallenged at the highest perch of nocturnal predators in the food chain. Powerful enough to take a porcupine, it is believed that in a confrontation with a bald eagle, the eagle might back down.

The most successful special outdoor event at the Bidwell House in recent years was the birds of prey lecture and demonstration by Tom Riccardi of Conway, Massachusetts, who runs a rehabilitation center for raptors that have been injured

and would not otherwise survive. Last year, a falconry program had to be cancelled because when the stellar performer, a goshawk, was being rehearsed the day before, it caught a pheasant and knocked it to the ground. Then suddenly, out of the blue, a great horned owl that had been taking all this in from the top of a tall pine, suddenly swooped down and killed the valuable goshawk. In the blink of an eyelid, a dominant predator had become the prey.

The great horned owl is also known to nest and lay eggs in late January and early February, placing it at the head of the class in getting ready for the next growing season. The female, which is larger than the male and has a deeper voice, will sit on the first egg to start incubation and keep it from freezing and then lay one or two more a week or so apart, so there is also a pecking order among chicks breaking their shells when



they are ready to hatch. They are spaced apart so the first into the world can be given the food and attention they need, and grow into their role dominance.

On December 22, when you prepare to sleep away the longest night, and perhaps the coldest, if you crack the window next to your bed you might hear from the

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## Highlands Communities Initiative Schedule

### Reading the Forested Landscape with Tom Wessels

The Highland Communities Initiative and the Williamsburg Grange are cosponsoring a presentation on December 6th by noted naturalist author, Tom Wessels, who brings alive the intricate and evolving story of our region and our landscape by using clues such as the shape, size, and type of trees, the decay of stumps, scars on trees, and the location of

tall pines of the forest across the way a series of some seven or eight bold deep hoots! The second, third, and fourth run together in a conversational sequence that in human phonics is usually heard as Who! Who-Who-Who-Who! Who! Who! but might sound like "Are you awake? . . . Me too!" And if all is otherwise very quiet out there on December 24th it might also be appropriate to read from Clement Moore's immortal poem, "Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse," as well as, "Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night."

— George Emmons

stone walls to unravel complex forest histories. Wessels teaches us how to read these landscape features as evidence of past events such as the abandonment of agricultural land, the impacts of hurricanes and other types of wind bursts, past logging activity, and the impacts of blights and fire. The talk will be at 7 p.m. at the Williamsburg Grange and is free and open to all.

### Introduction to Fund-Raising and Grant Writing

Money is an essential component of land conservation and community preservation projects. The Highland Communities Initiative is sponsoring a workshop on fund-raising and grant writing on December 11th at the Hinsdale Town Hall. Kimberly Longey, former Executive Director of the Hilltown Community Development Corporation, will be teaching participants the basics of how to approach donors and hold fund-raising events, as well as where to find applicable grants and how to write a successful application. The workshop is at 7 p.m. and is free and open to all.

For more information on either event, contact Wendy Sweetser at 413-587-0716 x14 or [wsweetser@ttor.org](mailto:wsweetser@ttor.org).



## Selected Recent Arrivals at Monterey Library

*On Noah's Ark*, Jan Brett  
*Kitchen Privileges: A Memoir*, Mary Higgins Clark  
*Blow Fly*, Patricia Cornwell  
*Art: A New History*, Paul Johnson  
*Intelligence in War*, John Keegan  
*The Tristan Betrayal*, Robert Ludlum  
*Living to Tell the Tale*, Gabriel Garcia Marquez  
*Dude, Where's My Country?*, Michael Moore  
*Love*, Toni Morrison  
*Junie B, First Grader One Man Band*, Barbara Park  
*Big Bad Wolf*, James Patterson  
*One Grain of Sand*, Pete Seeger  
*The Slippery Slope*, Lemony Snicket  
*The Opposite of Fate*, Amy Tan

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## P.O. Box 9

### Regarding the Boat Ramp

To the Editor:

I was unpleasantly surprised to discover that a serious preliminary proposal has been made to the Town of Monterey to locate a State Public Access Boat Ramp and Parking Facility on my property on Lake Garfield. Apparently, as reported in last month's *Monterey News*, the proposal would condemn eight contiguous lots along Peppermint Brook, including two meadow lots, which are the view from my home, lots belonging to Kathy and Barry Karson, Dr. Charles Brandywine, a nature preservancy organization, as well as a home and several lots belonging to Murray Bodin.

Needless to say I am quite upset at the proposal and have no idea as to its genesis. Below is a letter I sent to the Monterey Select Board on November 7 explaining the situation and my opposition to the proposal.

To the Select Board:

Last evening I learned from a Monterey neighbor that an article in the November issue of the *Monterey News*

reported that a preliminary proposal or suggestion has been made to condemn my residential property on the Peppermint Brook outlet to Lake Garfield, together with that of several neighbors, to construct a public boat launch ramp and parking area.

Please be advised of my complete objection to such a proposal and please notify me of any and all deliberations including any preliminary discussions on the subject of placing a public access boat ramp or auxiliary facilities on any part of my property. I am opposed to placing any such public facility on my property for many reasons including, but not limited to personal, environmental, aesthetic and moral which I have had insufficient time to consider in full or obtain professional help to articulate to greatest effectiveness.

Please allow me to express a few immediately apparent reasons for my objection:

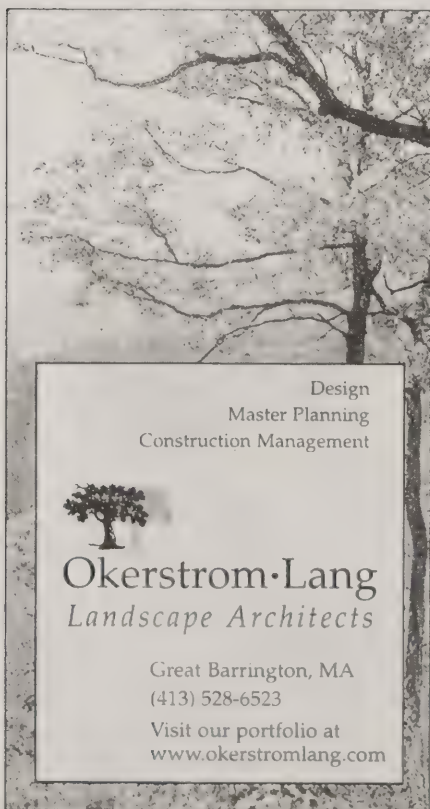
My home in Monterey consists of two small adjacent cottages and the two contiguous lots which they face across Peppermint Brook. The lots implicated in the site suggestion (the "meadow lots") are, in fact, my front yard. In this meadow, I cultivate, *inter alia*, a wildflower garden and fruit trees. The meadow lots provide the primary aesthetic focus for the two cottages (which we use as a single home) as well as the locus of my principal pas-

times at my home in Monterey. For me, and my family, our home in Monterey, including the two meadow lots, are sacred space and are at the core of who I, my wife Carol, and our children Dave (17) and Emily (13) are and what we are about.


For example, on weekend or vacation mornings, the ability for me and my family to share our gaze across the mist to see deer, fox, and coyote at peace in this natural environment, while the great blue heron flies by with huge but whispering wing beats and the beaver patrols the swamp before the otters, geese, and ducks create their daily commotion provides the source of personal energy that makes virtually everything we do in our lives possible. The value of the availability of this experience and place to us is immeasurable.

Similarly, we know from the canoes and kayaks that visit the swamp, that this place holds a special meaning and value for peace and finding a reverie with nature, or simply a sense of a small wilderness adventure for them as well. Many of our neighbors, with our permission, walk to or bring their small children to our meadow to see and to experience the wildflowers and "visit" the beavers and butterflies which my plantings attract. We are always happy to share with kind and considerate people.

Siting a public access boat ramp and parking facility on my property would



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## SMITTY IS COMING

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and listen to ours.

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destroy the natural beauty of the immediate area and adversely impact many, and perhaps most of the people who use the lake currently. It would also have dire environmental consequences.

When we first came to visit Monterey in 1980 and eventually bought our cottage on Peppermint Brook in 1987, we were greatly impressed with the unspoiled nature of Monterey and especially the lake. At that time, there were no buildings on the ridge lines or on the face of the mountain at the east end of the lake. It seemed more like the Far North rather than a place accessible from Boston, Hartford, or New York City in a couple of hours. We were also impressed by and relied upon Monterey's reputation for strictly limiting development and preserving the aesthetics of its special beauty and life-style. We are aware, for example, that a proposal to develop Jayson Camp (now the Jaffee property) had been put down in the strongest terms. My family and I would like to continue to believe in, and seriously hope we can rely on, Monterey's reputation and the good will of its voting and other residents, who like ourselves, have helped to create and maintain this very special aesthetic and way of life.

My meadow lots have been, since 1999, posted for no trespassing. The sign is obvious and cannot be missed. Last summer, I discovered complete strangers trespassing on my meadow lots armed with property maps (copies of a portion of Map 15) and an automobile. On this

occasion, a man and a woman driving a new gold colored SUV (a BMW, I believe) made a huge looping circle through my meadow, trampling cultivated plants, and squeezing between my fence and an apple tree so closely that the 3-year-old apple tree's roots were damaged. (The injury was not apparent immediately; however, due to the damage, I believe the tree, on the verge of bearing fruit next season, will not survive the winter).

I was also informed by a neighbor that late last fall (2002) a group of some five or six automobiles visited my meadow lots (and my neighbors') and the occupants were busy traipsing all over our respective properties taking measurements and consulting maps.

I do not now know if any of those trespassers are known to you or any agency of the Town. I certainly hope no lawful agent of the Town would ever trespass on any part of my residential property (including my meadow lots) or enter upon same without my written permission. While I feel it is necessary to state this in an abundance of caution, I feel sure the Town would not engage in or authorize this kind of illegal conduct.

I realize your time, attention and good will are valuable, I do not lightly trouble you with this except of perceived necessity and because I lost an entire night of sleep due to worry last evening. Thank you for your consideration.

— William J. Ban

## More on the Boat Ramp

To the Editor:

The new site proposal for a boat ramp off Hupi Road overlooks the following:

1. The series of small lots that might be used for parking are wetlands. These lots carry deeded rights to Ladd's Beach. Turning them into a parking area would deprive our neighbors of this privilege and destroy wetlands.

2. The Monterey Land Trust owns one of these lots. Turning this lot into a parking area might cast a shadow over future land donation to the Trust. This would not be in the best interest of the town.

3. The area in general is a small wild-life sanctuary, and might contain some endangered species. Turning this now undeveloped area into a parking lot might involve the town in some undesirable attention from conservation groups.

4. The lake access is through a major stream for the lake. This swamp area is used extensively by canoes and kayaks. This form of recreation would have to give way to motorboats and jet skis. This really does not seem fair to displace some  
(over >)

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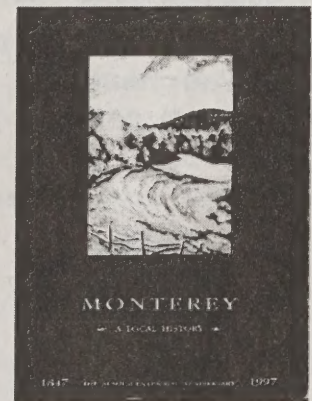
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townspeople's recreation in favor of other townspeople's recreation.

5. There is serious question as to ownership of Scott and Phelps Road. I believe these dirt lanes to be privately owned.

6. The main access road to this site is Hupi Road, which is accessed by Route 23. This end of Hupi is unpaved, winding, hilly, and very beautiful. To accommodate boat trailers safely this part of Hupi would have to be widened, leveled, and blacktopped. I wonder if the current residents would find this in their best interest. I also wonder if paving and leveling this end of Hupi, with the added traffic and maintenance is in the best interest of the town.

7. By my count, which comes from a town map, no less than 13 landowners are directly impacted by this proposal. This count includes only those properties starting at Scott Road. The homes on the lake and on Hupi Road that would be impacted are not included in this count. Is it in the best interest of the town to attempt to take these lakefront and lake access properties by eminent domain?

8. If all of the above objections were to be overcome, the dollar cost, whether

## Volunteers Sought for Toxins/Chemicals Research

Many people are concerned with the growing use and pervasiveness of toxins and chemicals in our lives. Pesticides, mercury, and many cleaning products harm our water, air, and wildlife, and have been linked to a range of serious

to the town or to the state would be more than an extraordinary waste of taxpayer money. This is particularly true with two other sites under consideration that do not have as many complicating factors attached to them.

As one of the land owners to be directly impacted by this proposal I am requesting ample notification of any and all deliberations including any preliminary discussions on the subject of a public access boat ramp or auxiliary facilities using or abutting any of the property known as the Old Jason Camp, including Scott and Phelps Roads.

Thank you for your consideration.

— Marjorie and Barry Jaffe

health problems. Safer alternatives are available, but people need to know why, how, and where to access them. With knowledge, we can ensure that our daily habits have fewer health and environmental impacts.

I am recruiting people who want to learn more about these issues and create alternative solutions—neighbor to neighbor. Similar to Master Gardeners and Master Recyclers, we will convene community "teams" with a common goal of reducing the use of toxins. Teams will choose target chemicals, audiences, and solutions. We will shape our activities to meet busy schedules. Funding limitations excludes towns with populations greater than 10,000.

If you are interested in participating, know someone else who might be, or would like more information, please contact me at 1-800-238-1221 or 413-445-4556 or [joyk@cetonline.org](mailto:joyk@cetonline.org). This community outreach is sponsored by the Center for Ecological Technology.

— Joy Kirschenbaum,  
Waste Management Specialist, CET

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### Roy Gottlieb & Laura Hays Announce the relocation of their healing practices to Great Barrington

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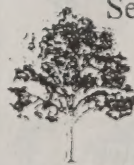
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## Calendar

**Every Monday (exc. holidays):** Select Board meeting, 8:30 a.m.–noon, Town Offices.

**Friday, December 5:** State Rep. Pignatelli speaks in community room of Monterey Meetinghouse. 7:30 p.m. All welcome. See p. 5.

**Monday, December 8:**

Public Hearing on Scenic Mountain Act at Town Hall, 10 a.m. See p. 3.

Full Moon

**Wednesday, December 10:** Community Dinner. Karl Finger entertains this month, 6 p.m. in community room of Meetinghouse. See p.5.

**Thursday, December 11:** Free blood pressure clinic, 2:30–3:30 p.m., Town Offices, administered by Visiting Nurses Assoc.

**Saturday, December 13:** Christmas Concert & festivities at Monterey Meetinghouse at 2 p.m. with Peter & Mary Alice Amidon. See p. 3.

**Saturday, December 20:** First day of Hanukkah

## Contributors

We are grateful to the following for recent contributions:

Ann and John Higgins  
Peter Heller  
Thomas & Melissa Scheffey  
Susan Sellew  
Colta & Gary Ives



**Monday, December 22:** Winter Solstice

**Thursday, December 25:** Christmas

**Friday, December 26:** First Day of Kwanzaa

## The Observer

**October 26–November 25**

High temp. (11/4) ..... 73°  
Low temp. (11/9) ..... 15°  
Avg. high temp. .... 51.8°  
Avg. low temp. .... 32.3°  
Avg. temp. .... 42°  
Total precipitation  
(rain and melted snow) ..... 6.1"  
Snowfall ..... 1"  
Season total snowfall ..... 3"  
(Last season total to date ..... 13")  
Precipitation occurred on 18 days.

## Hunting Season & Licenses

Shotgun season for deer opens on Monday, December 1, and runs through Saturday, December 13 (except Sundays). Black powder season runs from December 1 through December 31 (except Sundays).

Town Clerk Barbara Swann reports that hunting and fishing licenses for 2004 have been come in and are available at the Town Offices.

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Contributions from local artists this month:

Pat Arnow, pp. 2, 5, 9, 11, 13, 19; Maureen Banner, p. 4;  
George Emmons, p. 14; Bonner McAllester, p. 12.

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